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AUTHOR Moelono, M.
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ABSTRACT

The modern view suggests language be approached through speech. It is therefore customary that the first stages of language learning are spent on oral drills in order to make the sound system and the basic structures automatic habits. In countries where classes are big and the time spent on foreign language learning is limited, spending too long a time on oral drills is not very effective. The non-English environment does not offer a chance of any repetition of classroom drills. The case illustrated in this paper is taken from Indonesian schools where English teaching is begun in high school and the students are bilingual in the sense that they speak their vernaculars and the national language with great ease. Oral drills in the classroom have to be kept to the minimum. Since the students can already read and write well and books are the privilege of only the very few, reading is proposed to be given early. Therefore, proposals have arisen to modify the Oral Approach, especially because the ultimate aim of the average student is reading ability and not the spoken language. This report considers the following points: (1) the ultimate aims of teaching English in Indonesian schools, (2) the Oral Approach, and (3) proposals for supplementary materials and future course design. (Author/AMM)

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THE CASE FOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE ORAL APPROACH ARISING FROM A CONSIDERATION OF THE ULTIMATE AIMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN COUNTRIES WHERE ENGLISH IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

By

Mrs. M.Moelono

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The modern view suggests language be approached through speech. It is therefore customary that the first stages of language learning are spent on oral drills in order to make the sound system and the basic structures automatic habits. In countries where classes are big and the time spent on foreign language learning is limited, spending too long a time on oral drills is not very effective. The non-English environment does not offer a chance of any repetition of classroom drills. The case illustrated below is taken from Indonesian schools where English teaching is begun in high school. The students are bilingual in a sense that they speak their vernaculars and the national language with great ease. Oral drills in the classroom have to be kept to the minimum. Since the students can already read and write well and books are the privilege of only the very few, reading is proposed to be given early. It is for this reason, therefore, that proposals have arisen to modify the Oral Approach, especially because the ultimate aim of the average student is reading ability and not the spoken language. The following report is based on three main points:

A. The ultimate aims of teaching English in Indonesian schools

B. The Oral Approach

C. Proposals for supplementary materials and future course design.

A. The Ultimate Aims for Teaching English in Indonesian Schools

I. The Position of English

Long before Indonesia got its independence, English was already taught in high schools as a foreign language. The method that was generally used was the Translation Method, translating English into Indonesian or vice versa. Memorizing lists of English words without context with the meanings in Indonesian formed an important part of every lesson. Classroom meetings usually began with a test of a list of English words to be transferred into Indonesian or the other way round. Attention was also paid to pronunciation but never was pronunciation considered a particular item to be drilled. Only shortly before the end of the Dutch colonisation more attention was paid to the active mastery of English, but still translation was part of the activities. The need to learn English was limited to reading.

This position changed when Indonesia became independent. English became the first foreign language. English learning is compulsory in any high school. It is one of the subjects of the entrance tests to the universities and it has an important role in political and scientific activities. English words are inserted in Indonesian sentences by journalists and public speakers, English words are subjected to Indonesian habits. English names for hotels, organizations and public houses give evidence of the ever-growing popularity of the English language. To answer the need of the people to learn English, courses in English are established, and the radio broadcasts English lessons.

To ensure that English does not push aside the national language, the government has taken the necessary steps. Both Indonesian and English are for the child a foreign language. But the learning situation is quite different. Though the child speaks its vernacular at home and with friends, it hears Indonesian spoken everywhere. By the time he has to learn English he is

bilingual, having established linguistic habits of two languages which are quite different from those of English. When the former generations had to learn English, they had as their language background a western language, since Dutch was the medium of instruction from the Elementary schools on. It is therefore not surprising that English teachers of today are facing a more difficult job.

II. The Aims of Teaching English

Realizing the important status of English, improvements in English teaching have been made since 1952 in cooperation with the British Council, the Colombo Plan, the Ford Foundation and others. The status of English was fixed as the first foreign language. The aims for the teaching of English were outlined as follows:

Effective Reading Ability
Ability to understand spoken English
Writing Ability
Speaking Ability

Practice has shown that the ultimate aim for most of the students is reading ability. The majority of the students do not need to speak the language, but it is still felt that an adequate speaking ability has to be acquired. It is for this reason that the government considers the Oral Approach to be appropriate. To see how well this can be applied, let us consider school conditions in Indonesia.

As might be expected, they are far from being ideal. The buildings are very often poor and classes are overcrowded, with at least fifty students in each class. In these huge classes oral practice is impossible. Textbooks, though printed by the government, are still very expensive for the ordinary parents. Besides there is not enough supply of the students' books. The classrooms are usually used for other subjects so that it is not possible to try to create an English atmosphere, by having En-

glish pictures on the walls, for instance. The school libraries do not have English books for the students to enjoy.

B. The Oral Approach

I. The Salatiga Materials

The importance of English as the medium in the international world and the people's need to learn English have forced the government to begin improvements to English teaching since 1952. The government, sponsored by foreign foundations, sets up a syllabus, sends teachers abroad for further study, establishes an institution for inservice training courses for teachers and non-teachers, known as the Balai Bahasa Inggris in Jogjakarta, opens Standard Training Courses of teachers of English in Jogjakarta and Bukittinggi, all of these being efforts to promote English teaching.

A decree of the Minister of Education, dated 12-12-1967 No. 096/1967 stipulates the function of English as follows:

1. As a tool for developing country and nation
2. As a tool to extend friendship with other nations
3. As a tool to carry out foreign policy.

In the efforts to improve English teaching, the first need felt is the lack of textbooks.

A Material Development Board was established in 1958 which produced the so-called Salatiga Materials. The method used is the Oral Approach, applied to situations and conditions of Indonesia based on non-linguistic factors. Hence this method is widely known in Indonesia as the Salatiga Method. The basis underlying this method is the spoken form. Emphasis is put on the repetition of the basic sentence patterns to acquire automatic production within a limited vocabulary. The Salatiga Materials are designed for the three years of junior high school. The main

principle of these materials is oral drills. The first 50 lessons are done orally by using objects in class, visual aids (pictures, wallcharts and flash-cards) and classroom situations. Translation is avoided. The use of the native language comes in when no other means is possible. Phrases like "good-morning," "how are you," etc., are given from the first day on. Every lesson begins with a conversation as a stepping stone to introduce the structure of English sentences in real situation. Every presentation follows the following procedures:

Presentation	The teacher presents the new lesson and explains the meaning.
Pronunciation Check	The teacher listens carefully to the pronunciation of the students, who imitate him.
Drill	The students are drilled in the new sentence patterns by imitating the teacher.
Comprehension Check	The teacher asks questions, or students ask each other questions, using the newly learned patterns.

Reading drills come after the sixth week. The students repeat after the teacher the sentences which have been drilled orally but which are presented in written form now.

After Lesson 50, after the tenth week, they are taught writing, because it is expected that by now they are familiar with the written form.

After the 25th week, they are taught reading for comprehension under the careful guidance of the teacher. Each reading passage is followed by a set of questions which they have to answer with the aid of the teacher. Oral composition is introduced after Lesson 131. The students have to tell a story based on a series of pic-

tures. In the third year this oral composition is followed by written composition, still carefully guided.

Reading assignments are given for homework which are meant as a repetition of classroom reading. These assignments are then discussed in class.

In order that teachers are qualified to use these materials and in order to have a follow-up of the course, in 1967 the government, with the aid of the Ford Foundation, established:

1. An English Teachers Upgrading Project
2. Materials Development Project as a continuation of the preceding project, to continue writing textbooks for the Senior High Schools.

Regular upgrading courses for teachers are held with the aim to:

Introduce the Salatiga Materials and the method which is used

Upgrade teachers in the knowledge and skills to use the Salatiga Materials

Train teachers from different areas to carry out the Salatiga Method

Improve the teachers knowledge and fluency in the use of English

Although all these efforts of the government seem good, the results of English teaching have not yet been as they should. The reasons are that the class meets for only four periods a week of 40 minutes each. Drills cannot therefore be given intensively if they want to finish the syllabus at the given time. Not all teachers can participate in the upgrading courses, so they are not equipped for their job. Fortunately the materials are written more or less in the form of a lesson plan, so that they won't risk failure by following

the instruction line by line.

II. The Work of the Teacher Training Institute in Jogjakarta including Proposals for Modifying the Methods and Salatiga Materials

The Teacher Training Institute in Jogjakarta has several high schools as laboratory schools. These schools have a different organization than the ordinary government's schools, but the curriculum and the final exams have to be the same. The examinations are conducted by the teachers themselves under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. In this way the teachers have the freedom to experiment with new methods or modifying old ones. Arising from a general complaint by teachers and parents about the decline of the results of English teaching for the last few years, the English Department of the Institute has made investigations of the poor results since last year. Public opinion says that this failure is felt after the use of the Salatiga Materials in the schools, which means that they indirectly blame the Oral Approach. It is therefore the task of the English Department of the Institute to find out where the weaknesses are which have brought about the poor results. These poor results can easily be seen in the entrance tests at the universities. English as an application course is required for the first year of the university, but some universities include in their curriculum the teaching of English for three years, because of the need of the students. The first year at the university is usually spent on remedial work. High school graduates from different parts of Indonesia are heterogeneous so teachers usually start with elementary English again instead of training the students to acquire a better speed of reading for comprehension.

No remedial course would have been necessary if teaching in high schools were good. This requires good teachers and uniform textbooks. In the junior high schools, thanks to the Salatiga Materials, there is no problem as to the content of the course. The Materials Development Project has begun a try-out of the Senior

High School textbook. We hope that in the near future the need for uniformity of course material will be met.

Though the ultimate aim is reading ability, yet we all need an understandable skill in speaking. The appropriate method at the beginning stages is therefore the Oral Approach. The spoken form must be learned first, but the time for the learning of English in high schools being so limited, oral drills should not take too long a time. The reading and writing ability of the students should be utilized to help the oral practice to be more effective. This means modifying the Salatiga Materials and with them the Oral Approach. Experience of the preceding years led us to make changes.
These changes concern:

Pronunciation
Arrangements of the lessons
Earlier introduction of reading and writing
Substitution tables
Addition of vocabulary
Postponing the conversation pieces
Use of the native language.

The Salatiga Materials are written in about the same way as any other course material. They do not reflect the particular problems the Indonesian students might encounter though they were written in Indonesia. The teachers in using the materials have to keep the native language constantly in mind to find possible contrasts to focus on.

Pronunciation

At junior high school level the students are bilingual. Every student speaks his vernacular at home and with friends, and Indonesian is used as the language medium in schools, on the radio, etc. The habits of the sound system of both languages are already established so that English as a foreign language will have to overcome

the interference of the linguistic habits of two languages. It is therefore not enough to correct students'mistakes when they occur, but pronunciation exercises must be given in order to acquire an acceptable pronunciation. The sound systems of the vernacular and the national language must be kept in mind as a guide to where to dwell longer and where not to in the drills. A list of very common errors is given below. The illustrations are taken from a Javanese Indonesian environment.

STOPS

1. voiceless stops [p, t, k] are never aspirated
2. voiced stops [b, d, g] are not fully voiced; in final positions they are repeated by voiceless stops.

AFFRICATES [tš] and [dž] are replaced by a sequence of [ts] and [dz] with no protruding of the lips.

FRICATIVES

1. [v] and [z] are replaced by [f] and [s]. The students will not be able to make a difference between:
   'vine' and 'fine'
   'leave' and 'leaf'
   'zeal' and 'seal'
   'lazy' and 'lacy'
   'eyes' and 'ice'
2. [θ] is substituted by [t] or [s] in initial position.
   'thank' becomes 'tank' or 'sank'
   In medial and in final position it is usually substituted by [t]
   'ruthless' becomes 'rootless'
   'fourth' becomes 'fort'

3. [š] is substituted by [s] or [sy]

4. [r] is substituted by trilled [r]

CLUSTERS are usually pronounced by inserting [ə] between the elements.

'sky' [s ə k a i]

'lips' [l i p ə s]

VOWELS 1. [ɛ] no difference between 'bed' and 'bad'

2. [ʊ] no difference between 'full' and 'fool'

3. [ɔ:] no difference between 'port' and 'pot'

SEMIVOWEL [ ] is pronounced without lip rounding.

DIPHTHONGS are usually pronounced without a glide or with a juncture between the elements.

'take' [t I k]

'gown' [g a + u n]

English intonation and rhythm are different from Indonesian. English has stress-timed rhythm, whereas Indonesian has syllable-timed rhythm. From the very beginning, good intonation and rhythm exercises have to be practised. Pyramid rhythm exercises prove to be very helpful.

The list of common errors is not complete but at least it can give a picture of how difficult pronunciation is for the Indonesian students so that this case cannot be neglected. Every lesson has to be started with pronunciation drills for a few minutes as a warming-up item.

In the selection of vocabulary words, those which might offer a pronunciation problem should be postponed. In the drills of the past tense, the regular verbs are taken up first. The ones with the same pronunciation are grouped together. The same thing applies for the plural forms.

Arrangements

It is sometimes more convenient to have certain lessons put forward to make learning easier. To anticipate the continuous present, the adjectives come early, following the structure: "He is a student'. The succesive structures run:

1. He is Ali.
2. He is a student.
3. He is happy.
4. He is reading.
5. He is reading a book.
6. He is reading in the room.

The wall charts have to be revised in the order, too.

Pronouns - are arranged in two groups:

I. I - we - you - they - Tono and Tini

II. he - she - the teacher - my father.

To save time several lessons can be grouped together and presented as a group, for example:

Lesson 82. He is going to clean the blackboard.
83. What is Ali going to do?
84. Is he going to clean the board?
Yes, he is. No, he is not.
86. Is Ali going to open the door?

Each of these lessons need not be presented one by one, but they can be taken up in one period as follows:

82. Ali is going to clean the board.
84. Is he going to clean the board?
Yes, he is.
86. Is Ali going to open the door?
No, he is not.
83. What is he going to do?
He is going to clean the board.

Reading and writing

At this age the students can read and write Indonesian well and therefore there is no need to wait for reading and writing as late as in the Salatiga Materials. That language must be approached through speech is true. Therefore reading and writing can only be introduced after the students have mastered one structure pattern orally. After the end of a structure drill the patterns are written on the board in the form of a substitution table. Since books are expensive, the average student cannot afford to buy them, and these substitution tables can help them to practise the learned pattern at home. Of course the students are given practice on how to read these substitution tables. It will be a reward for teachers to see how the students are playing around with the sentences. These exercises are meant to supplement the limited practice in class.

These tables must be carefully planned so that spelling irregularities can be postponed. Though the focus is not put on the spelling, this homework can be considered as a forerunner of writing.

Vocabulary

In the first stages only a limited vocabulary can be given to operate the structures with. Yet it will be boring if the same words come back in the same arrangements. The students are very eager to learn and to satisfy them the same patterns can be utilised in a different context using additional vocabulary. Short stories can be assigned to be read at home with accompanying comprehension questions to be answered. New vocabulary items are given a glossary. It must be remembered that not too many new words must be added and these words which are not repeated often enough in the course books should be repeated in these readers. Cognates and words of high frequency play an important role in vocabulary selection. To check whether the students have done the assignments, regular quizzes are given and the marks entered in their reports.

Conversation

While the Salatiga Materials use conversation as a stepping stone to introduce new structures, it is often felt that there are too many problems involved. Observation indicates that the students imitate the sentences without understanding the meaning. The teachers usually make use of translations to make the students understand. By postponing these conversation pieces until the students have mastered the structures and common phrases saves a great deal of time and the teachers need not seek refuge in translations. Though contracted forms are needed for these conversations, it is preferable to give the full forms. Forms like the following:

He is Ali.	Who is there?
Is he Ali?	Whose book is there?

will not serve any problem. Contracted forms in the spoken language can be postponed until the students get used to the fact that the pronunciation is often different from the spelling.

The native language

Where the habits of the native language and the foreign language are similar, transfer takes place. But interference occurs when the habits are different. On these patterns the teacher has to dwell longer, and drills are effective when the students have been shown the contrast. For example:

He	is	a	teacher
Dia	-	-	guru

Usually the students have difficulty in learning 'is' and 'a' because these do not occur in the native language. By showing them the contrast between the English and the Indonesian patterns, the difference is immediately grasped and drilling becomes effective.

The native language is also used to check the understanding of the students. Comprehension checks in English might not prove whether the students know the native equivalent.

Another case where the native language is used is when abstract words come in.

Pictures might not convey the real purpose for which they are meant. The picture which is used to drill in the pattern: "He is wating for the bus" is an instance of this. When the students were asked to give the native equivalent for this sentence, they gave the equivalent for: "He is carrying a suitcase" or "He is going to cross the street," because the picture shows a man standing on the side of the road, carrying a suitcase. The use of the native language to introduce the purpose of the picture will eliminate this wrong conception. It must be remembered, though, that the native language does not function as in the translation method.

C. Proposals for Supplementary Materials and Future Course Design

I. The Selection of Course Materials

The need for selection

In countries where English is a foreign language and not the medium of instruction in the schools there is an extremely limited amount of time available for the study of English in the curriculum. In Indonesia where English is begun in the junior high school, the students have only four 40 -minute periods of English each week. At the senior high schools the student has three or four periods, depending on the study selected. This means that the student has at the most two hours 40 minutes of English instruction each week or 107 hours in a 40-week school year. If the student completes the six-year school course he will have had only 642 hours of instruction. The limits imposed by this factor will be clear when we compare this with the 4800 hours of English practice which the student would get in a six-year course in an English-medium school

if he had only 20 hours of English each week. These simple statistics suggest the heavy responsibility placed on the course designer to select his material with care.

A further consideration is the psychological fact that no learning item can be established after a single or a few encounters. The establishment of each new item requires many repetitions of learning effort by the student at spaced intervals throughout the course. The limited time available is very precious and this cannot be wasted by the introduction of too much new material. The course has to take care that each new item is sufficiently repeated to ensure the establishment of that item. The present courses are often deficient in this respect, because many words are only introduced into the course a very few times and do not become established as part of the student's vocabulary. Course designers, faced with the limited amount of time must resist the temptation to introduce too much material into the course if they are to make the best use of time available.

A third consideration which must be borne in mind is the frequent absence of the students because of illness.

Inattention by the students may also reduce learning efficiency. Courses should be written with realism and allow for factors like these.

It is clear that the mere fact that any teaching item is "good English" cannot justify its inclusion into the course.

Such a loose criterion for selection as this would not be an adequate guide to the course designer. Its application could result in a course which would not provide any workable knowledge of the language. Much more rigorous principles of selection must be applied.

Criteria for selection

Frequency of items

By far the most important criterion is the frequency of the learn-

ing item. The amount of learning effort involved in acquiring any two items may be roughly the same, but the amount of power which their acquisition will give the learner in using the language will vary greatly depending on the frequency of these items. Intuition, even of the native speaker, is a very unreliable guide to the frequency of learning items. The course designer must make frequent reference to frequency counts which are available. Items which have a low frequency should not be included in the course.

Regularity of items

It is wrong to think that the student will learn the items in his course as separate and distinct entities.
He will see patterns in what he learns so that he will be able to predict the use of future items more easily.
A language is a system and the common patterns of the language are the regularities in the system. Priority should therefore be given to these regular patterns, exceptional forms and patterns should be postponed until their introduction cannot be avoided.
This principle applies to every aspect of the language. In the relationship of spelling and pronunciation for instance, Axel Wijk has shown that there is a much greater degree of regularity in English than many teachers imagine. In the materials presented in written form, priority must be given to the words which have a regular spelling.
In the case of the past tense forms like "shut" can easily interfere with the acquisition of the regular "-ed" forms. This is true for the Indonesian students, where the native language does not mark past time with formal distinctions. A regular form like "close-closed" should be taken instead. Sentences like "He goes to school" or "He goes to church" which are considered as "good English" are not good to teach. For the students words like "school," "church," etc., take "a," "the," "his," etc., in English, marking the contrast with the native language.
For this reason it would be much better not to teach them at all at the beginning level.
The clause ".... and so does he" does not reinforce the regular syntac-

tical feature of English, that in a statement the subject precedes the verb. The form "and he does too" should be taught instead.

Area of applicability

New learning items should give the student extended power in his use of the language rather than alternative ways in putting concepts which he can already express. A distinction should therefore be made between items for production and items for recognition. The limitations imposed by time and the factors mentioned above, make it imperative that the student's learning effort should result in the greatest possible extension to his area of expression in the language. To learn synonymous items is a waste of time. The student may, for instance, need to recognize "start," "begin" or even "commence," but he need only have a productive knowledge of "begin."

Usefulness of items in both spoken and written English

The limited amount of time available for the study of English raises the question whether we can afford to attempt to teach all the four skills of the language, e.g., listening, speaking, reading and writing. A more limited aim would be more realistic and a more attainable goal. However, this is a question which depends on the needs of the country. Where it is decided to teach both spoken and written English, we should at least attempt to teach forms which are common to both spoken and written English. The contracted forms of the verb "to be," for instance, have a very limited use in written English and are not essential for spoken English. It will therefore be less confusing to teach the full form, especially when these are difficult enough for the students, since they do not have parallels in the native language.

The student's needs

The points just discussed can be summarized by saying that the most important criterion to include any item in the course is that the student needs this item at that stage of the course. When a child learns his native language, his own needs determine the acquisition of the item.

At every stage, his own language, though at first very limited, is always self-sufficient and always appropriate to his needs. A school course should therefore be written on this principles, and not only on purely grammatical considerations.

It is clear that careful planning is essential before course writing can begin. Lists of items must be drawn up for every stage of the course. No aspect of the language can be neglected. The pronunciation, the structure, the vocabulary of the language must be carefully checked with these principles actively in mind.

II. The Arrangement of the Course Material

The course designer does not only have to face the problem of what content he has to include in his course but also how to arrange and order his material. Many courses consist of a cumulative step by step presentation of the items, so that the students will not understand an item without a knowledge of the item or items which precede it.

This kind of course is not very suitable for a number of reasons--for instance, frequent absence or inattention, as mentioned above. If a student misses one lesson or fails to understand one lesson, he may not be able to understand the following lessons.

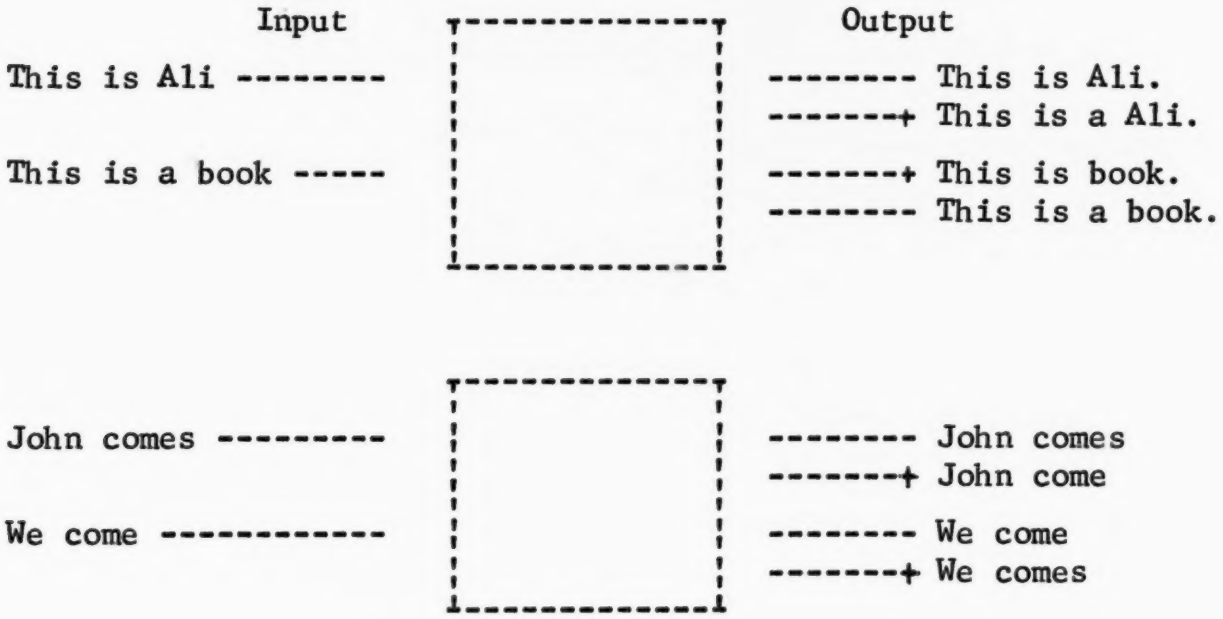
He will easily be disheartened and resign himself to failure or non-comprehension.

The materials usually do not take care of differing abilities. All the children are expected to learn at the same rate. Some children with less ability will not be able to keep up and some children with more ability will be retarded.

These courses usually do not provide enough repetition of many items so that these are not established. Much of the vocabulary for instance, is only used on a very few occasions and the ratio of new words to words which have been used before is often as great or even greater than in any arbitrarily selected sample of English. The same

objections also apply to syntactical items. A further objection is that as the course progresses, the frequency of the items and, therefore, their relative importance, decreases. However, the amount of time spent on the learning of each item remains the same, or maybe more, as these items become more difficult. So more and more time is spent on items which are less and less important. Slower progress will be made to acquire a workable knowledge of the language.

Sometimes little or no thought is given to the spacing of the items which are likely to be confused. A similar item is often introduced before the other item is established. Many mistakes are caused by the interference of these items. The following diagram illustrates the result.



The memory does not function to reproduce every item independently. It reconstructs what has been presented. For this, it may easily reconstruct an item on the pattern of another item which was presented before the first item was established. This principle should therefore be taken into account before any course writing is done.

What shape of course than is suitable for use in schools in countries like Indonesia?

This is a very big question and we will only probably be able to make some suggestions towards a solution.

The material in the course should be arranged to avoid as many of the objections given above as is possible. There should be much more repetition of the items in the course, which means greater care concerning the basis of the principles of selection we have mentioned.

Lists of words, syntactical items, etc., which will be included in the course at each level must be made and the occurrences of the items in the course must be checked to ensure that there are enough repetitions to establish them. The order of introduction within these levels may not be so important as the spacing to avoid confusion.

At every level the child should be given a self-sufficient language which he can use. The differences in structure between the native language and English have to be given special attention and additional time in the course. The amount of class time spent on each item should be in proportion to its frequency, not its difficulty. There should be supplementary materials to extend the brighter students.

III. Motivation

One of the problems of the language teacher is how to encourage the student to make all the repetitions of effort which are necessary for establishing the items in the course. Repetitions only are not enough. What is needed is repetition with conscious effort.

The course designer must give thought to types of exercises which challenge the student to exert effort. Many variations on puzzle-type exercises, for instance, can challenge the student to make many useful repetitions of useful sentences and also to think in the language.

Example: Tom and Jane are travelling to Djakarta.
Mary and Bill are travelling to Bandung.
Tom and Mary are going in a train.
Bill and Jane are going in a bus.

Here is a boy. He is going to Bandung in a bus. What is his name?

Here is a girl. She is going to Djakarta in a train. What is her name?

This kind of puzzle exercise motivates repetition with effort. Reading also has an important place in providing opportunities for motivated repetitions. Many reading passages in use are passages for study because they involve too many new words. Reading passages in which most of the words have been previously presented and are familiar to the students can be an enjoyable experience and a reward for learning.

At the same time it provides reinforcement of the words. Since reading is the easiest language skill to acquire and the one which the student in a non-English environment has the greatest opportunity to use, it ought to be given greater priority.